

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

ACDA-05 BIB-01 /066 W

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R 121100Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9822

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 2122

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJ: MASHEROV COOL TO BREZHNEV AT BELORUSSIAN PARTY CONGRESS

REF: MOSCOW 1824

1. SUMMARY: BELORUSSIAN PARTY LEADERSHIP REMAINS STABLE. MASHEROV SEEMS RELATIVELY COOL IN REFERENCES TO BREZHNEV IN CONGRESS REPORT. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ELECTION OF MEMBERS AND CANDIDATE MEMBERS TO THE PARTY BUREAU OF THE BELORUSSIAN REPUBLIC DEMONSTRATES AGAIN THAT FEW MAJOR CADRE SHIFTS ARE BEING MADE IN THE REPUBLICS. OF THE SIXTEEN MEMBERS AND CANDIDATES ELECTED AT THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM ON FEBRUARY 6 ONLY TWO ARE NEWCOMERS.

3. FIRST SECRETARY MASHEROV'S REPORT TO THE CONGRESS WAS SURPRISINGLY LACKING IN PRAISE FOR BREZHNEV. WHILE USING THE STANDARD "POLITBURO HEADED BY" FORMULATION IN REFERRING TO BREZHNEV ON TWO OCCASIONS, HE DEVOTES LITTLE PRAISE TO BREZHNEV'S QUALITIES AS A LEADER AND DOES NOT MENTION SPECIAL ATTENTION GIVEN BY BREZHNEV TO BELORUSSIA. MASHEROV'S TREATMENT OF BREZHNEV CONTRASTS PARTICULARLY WITH THE VERY FAVORABLE COMMENTS HE MADE ABOUT BREZHNEV IN

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DECEMBER 1975 (PRAVDA, DECEMBER 11, 1975) AND WITH

THE DESCRIPTIONS OF BREZHNEV BY LEADERS IN OTHER
REPUBLICS (SEE REFTTEL). THE BELORUSSINA PARTY LETTER TO
THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE IS SOMEWHAT MORE POSITIVE IN
REFERENCES TO BREZHNEV, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT ADDRESSED TO
BREZHNEV (THUS ONLY BELORUSSIAN AND LATVIA HAVE OMITTED
BREZHNEV AS AN ADDRESSEE).

4. FOREIGN POLICY WAS HARDLY MENTIONED BY MASHEROV, ALTHOUGH
HE DID NOTE THE SUCCESSES IN REALIZATION OF THE PEACE PROGRAM
AND IN THE RELAXATION OF INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS.

5. COMMENT: WE ARE PUZZLED AS TO WHY MASHEROV AT THE
BELORUSSIAN CONGRESS BACKED AWAY FROM HIS HEAVY PRAISE
OF BREZHNEV ONLY TWO MONTHS AGO. NO IMMEDIATE CONVINCING ANSWER IS
APPARENT. ONE POSSIBILITY IS THAT MASHEROV HOPED
FOR PROMOTION TO FULL POLITBURO MEMBERSHIP TWO MONTHS AGO
AND NOW HAS WORD THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN.
STOESSEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY MEETINGS, COMMUNISTS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MOSCOW02122
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760054-0341
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760256/aaaabwja.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MOSCOW 1824
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <01 JUL 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MASHEROV COOL TO BREZHNEV AT BELORUSSIAN PARTY CONGRESS
TAGS: PINT, UR, (BREZHNEV, LEONID I)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006